



Sulaiman Ismail Inspiring Reading Environments



"Flying high at Hawksmoor"

Context

- Hawksmoor Primary School is set in a deprived but developing area of Thamesmead.
- An over subscribed, inclusive, 3 form entry for children 3-11 years.
- There is ample play space with separate, well-equipped, playgrounds for each key stage.

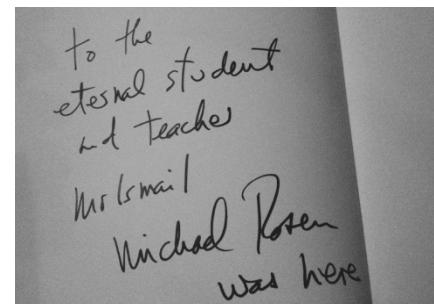




"Flying high at Hawksmoor"

Context

- Local demographic breakdown according to The Office for National Statistics:
 - 42.9% Black, 42.4 White, 7.8 Asian, 5.3 mixed, 1.7 other ethnic groups.
- The school has a strong focus on reading across all year groups - classroom libraries and reading areas are well stocked and attractive to the reader.
- The school hosts several opportunities during the year to buy new books and have invited well known authors to visit the school.



OU Research inspiration and rationale

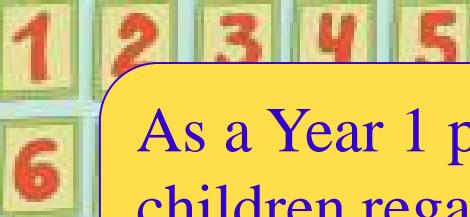
“Reading to children, reading by children, reading with children is crucial.”

Having reviewed the various aspects of the TaRs research and their benefits, I questioned how I could influence the readers in my Year 1 class. By assessing current practice at school, I could see that the reading environment in class was positive, reading *by* the children was a requirement, reading *with* the children in guided reading was a requirement - clearly reading in class was happening, but could we look at NOT reading in the classroom?



Aims

- To facilitate children's understanding that reading can happen anywhere
- To encourage parents to read at home with their children - or anywhere outside of school
- To gain a better understanding of the children's perspective on reading aloud



As a Year 1 practitioner, I questioned the perspective of the children regarding where they could read - is it confined to the reading corner? Or perhaps guided reading sessions? Where can we read?

As Hawksmoor has a strong foundation in phonics and reading, I decided to use the reading survey by the Open University to gauge children's perspectives on current practise.

I then implemented a strategy to expand the perception of the children on where to read

Actions

First, the OU reading survey - the response was positive with most children completing the form themselves.

Most children consider themselves good or very good readers.
Most children prefer to read at school.

Next, a new space was created just outside the classroom in the courtyard for children to be read to.

Then, Reading Aloud in the playground area.

Lastly, a second round survey to assess what children thought about reading outside now.

Actions



Survey Two questions...
What do you think about being read to
outside?
Where do you think you can read when
you're not at school?

Impact and what the children say

87% of children now prefer to be read to outside if possible

13% of children say its too bright or too noisy
(school is in the direct flight path of London City Airport)

Some of the children's recommended locations to read are:
beach, park, garden, train, field...Nanny's house.
(Clearly children are now considering where they could read.)

Children are now regularly asking whether we can go outside to read!

Reflections on impact the TaRs research had on practice

Having set out to challenge the perception of where we could read, I was pleased to find that children increasingly started to think about places to read - and more importantly - having some children taking their reading to those 'unfamiliar' reading settings.

I now take every opportunity to read aloud outside - even before PE!

Additionally, having heard a reading by a visiting author made me realise that even as adults, it's really enjoyable just listening to a story being read and going on a journey through someone else's expression.

